

- If someone else is digging or drilling on your property, be aware that you may own some of the utility lines and other underground facilities on your property. You are responsible for marking their location. This includes lines such as those running from private wells to homes and home septic lines.
- For more information on locating lines you own, request a copy of a Property Owners Fact Sheet.

### If You Hit a Line

- If you damage, dislocate or disturb an underground utility line, immediately notify the affected utility.
- If damage creates safety concerns, call the fire department and take immediate steps to safeguard health and property.
- Federal law requires you to call 911 if a gas line is damaged.
- Any time an underground line is damaged or disturbed, or if lines are improperly marked, you must file an Incident Report with the MPUC. For an Incident Report form, contact the MPUC.
- Negligence or non-compliance with the above rules may result in fines that could reach \$5,000 or more.

### If You Don't Call, Here's What Can Happen

- Personal injury, including loss of life
- Damage to utility lines such as telephone, cable, emergency fire and police, electric, natural gas, pipelines, sewer, traffic signals and water lines
- Costly delays
- Expensive repairs
- Legal problems
- Civil penalties
- Liability

Whether you are a contractor, excavator, underground utility operator, property owner, or just planning to dig with mechanical tools, please do your part!

- Pre-mark the location of your dig.
- Call Dig Safe® toll-free, 1-888-DIGSAFE, or 811, or visit [www.digsafe.com](http://www.digsafe.com), before you start your project.
- Call utilities which are not Dig Safe® members, 1-888-OKTODIG, or visit [www.OKTODIG.com](http://www.OKTODIG.com).
- Wait for utilities to be marked.
- Respect all marks.
- Dig with care.

Even when precautions are taken accidents can still happen. If a line is hit or even scratched, please call the underground utility operator and file a report with the MPUC.

APWA Color Code for marking underground utility lines	
Electric	Reclaimed Water
Gas/Oil	Sewer
Communication/CATV	Temporary Survey Marking
Water	Proposed Excavation



**Maine Public Utilities Commission**  
18 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0018  
(207) 287-3831 / (800) 452-4699  
[www.maine.gov/mpuc](http://www.maine.gov/mpuc)



**Dig Safe® System, Inc.**  
1-888-DIGSAFE (1-888-344-7233) OR 811  
[www.digsafe.com](http://www.digsafe.com)

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**Contractors Excavators Landscapers Property Owners**

# Dig Safe® in Maine

**Get All the Dirt on Maine's Dig Safe Rules**



**Maine  
Public Utilities  
Commission**  
Revised in 2010

## Dig Safe® is Your First Call

Safe digging starts when you call 1-888-DIGSAFE or 811. That call is the first step in a safety process that requires everyone's cooperation, responsiveness and good judgment.



The Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) enforces the state's Dig Safe® Law which applies to all groups involved in ground-penetrating projects including excavators, landscapers, utility line owners, and property owners (Title 23 §3360-A and MPUC Rules Chapter 895).

Dig Safe® is ready to help! This NO COST service starts with your call to Dig Safe® before you dig. Dig Safe® then notifies

utilities who are members of their system that they need to mark the location of the underground lines and other facilities they own or maintain.

You must call Dig Safe® for *any* digging project – large or small – during which you will disturb the earth in any way using a mechanical method. A mechanical method includes any equipment or tool powered by a motor. In this brochure these activities are called “excavating,” but they include all kinds of ground-penetrating activities, such as:

- Installing mailboxes or clotheslines
- Planting trees or shrubs
- Rebuilding walls or driveways
- Major landscaping projects or building additions
- Installing sewer lines, septic systems or drains
- Road construction or reconstruction

Dig Safe® only notifies its “member” utilities about the digging project. Then Dig Safe® will tell you the member utilities in your area. You must also notify all non-member utilities directly. Non-member utilities generally include town or city water and sewer districts, small local utilities, such as some electric, telephone or other utilities, and private property owners.

Throughout Maine, careless digging, drilling and blasting cause far-reaching consequences – from serious personal injury and environmental damage to costly delays and disruptions of utility service. The MPUC vigorously enforces the law so please make sure that you know and understand it. By working together, we can make digging in Maine safer for everyone.

## If You Are Excavating

- Pre-mark the boundaries of your proposed excavation with white paint, flags or stakes. Add the excavator's initials to the pre-mark so locators know they are at the right site. If using a single stake to pre-mark, note the radius of the proposed dig on the pre-mark.
- Contact Dig Safe®, toll-free, at 1-888-DIGSAFE or 811, or [www.digsafe.com](http://www.digsafe.com), at least three business days – but no more than 30 calendar days – before starting work. Don't assume someone else will make the call.
- Have all important information about the location ready: the city/town, street/road, location description, extent and type of work, contact person and phone number and the excavator/company name and phone number.
- If blasting, notify Dig Safe® at least one business day in advance. Dig Safe® must be notified at the time of the initial call if blasting is planned. If unanticipated blasting is needed, you must notify Dig Safe® and wait four (4) hours. All blasting sites must have a current and active Dig Safe® ticket.
- For emergency excavations, pre-mark and call Dig Safe®. Dig Safe® handles emergency locating requests 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.
- For jobs involving subcontractors, the excavator actually doing the digging must make sure the project has a Dig Safe® ticket and that all non-member notification has been made. Non-member utility contact information may be located at [www.oktodig.com](http://www.oktodig.com), or at 1-888-OKTODIG.

- Don't Guess! Call Dig Safe® even if you are working in a rural area or on private property and think you know where utilities are located. Dig Safe® is a FREE service – you aren't charged for calls to Dig Safe® or for member utility-locating services.
- Wait three business days for lines to be located and marked with color-coded paint, flags or stakes. Note the color of the marks and the type of utilities they indicate.
- If Dig Safe®, non-member utilities in the area and the property owners notify you that there are no utilities in the work area, you may start work immediately.
- Re-notify Dig Safe® and the non-member utilities if the digging, drilling or blasting does not occur within 30 calendar days, or if the marks are lost due to weather conditions, site work activity or any other reason.
- Dig with care! Always hand dig within 18 inches in any direction of any underground line until the line is exposed. Mechanical methods may be used for initial site penetration, such as removal of pavement or rock.
- If you find unmarked utilities, immediately notify the utility owner. Treat them as “live” until the owner visits the site and identifies them as abandoned.
- Do not backfill over unmarked or damaged lines without permission from the utility owner.
- You must follow Dig Safe® requirements in addition to town, city and/or state DOT street opening permit requirements.
- For complete Dig Safe® requirements, call the MPUC at (207) 287-3831, or 1-800-452-4699, or visit our website for a free copy of the Dig Safe® law at [www.maine.gov/mpuc](http://www.maine.gov/mpuc).

## If You Are a Property Owner

- YES! You are responsible for safe digging, even for “backyard” projects or landscaping.
- If you are acting as the excavator for your projects, you must also follow all requirements in the previous “If You Are Excavating” section.

*Continued on next page*